

Just last Sunday National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice told the American people that "Iraq was the most dangerous regime in the world." Where is the truth?

Mr. Speaker, this administration would never be able to justify the war on Iraq because we cannot believe a word they say. They have never been honest about why we went to war. Just ask the former Treasury Secretary, Paul O'Neill. He told the Nation this administration was hell bent to go to war from day one, even before the President took oath of office.

And it is not just Iraq. It is almost on every issue, every comment, every deed. We cannot believe a word they say.

The Bush administration proposed a \$550 billion Medicare prescription drug bill and told us it will only cost \$400 billion. They cut down trees on public land and call it "Healthy Forests." They let industry pollute our air and call it "Clear Skies."

The President himself, President Bush, proudly told the American people that his budget would cut the deficit in 5 years, but his budget does not pay for Iraq. It does not pay for Afghanistan. It does not pay for his tax cuts for the rich.

Mr. Speaker, instead of searching for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, we should be searching for the truth right here at home. The Bible tells us, "The truth will set you free." And we will not find it at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue. The British novelist John Le Carre once said, "I think the single greatest enemy is the misuse of information, the perversion of the truth in the hands of terribly skillful people."

On the eve of the anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, we must reflect on these words. President Bush and his administration have misused information. They have perverted the truth, and now 600 Americans are dead, 10,000 civilians are dead in Iraq, hundreds of thousands of our sons and daughters, brave men and women, young people, 18, 19, 21, 23 years old, have been torn from their homes, from their families, and sent thousands of miles from home.

□ 2015

I would ask the President, what are they fighting for? I would ask him why so many of our young people are dead and wounded, but I do not want his answer. I do not want the answer from the Vice President or Secretary Powell or Secretary Rumsfeld. The American people do not want more of what we have been hearing for the past year. What we want, Mr. Speaker, and what we need more than anything else, is the truth.

WASHINGTON WASTE WATCHERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire). Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, along with several of my colleagues from the Washington Waste Watchers, a Republican working group dedicated to rooting out the rampant waste, fraud, and abuse in the Federal Government.

Over the last 3 weeks, my colleagues on the Committee on the Budget have been discussing the Federal budget and debating the growth of government spending. With a historically large deficit and with Federal spending now exceeding \$20,000 per American household for only the fourth time in American history and for the first time since World War II, many Democrats say, it is time to raise taxes yet again on the American people. Democrats are demanding that we roll back the tax relief that is responsible for the unparalleled growth that we have had in our economy, the tax relief that is bringing down our unemployment, the tax relief that amounts to only 1 percent, 1 percent of the \$13.1 trillion 5-year spending plan the Committee on the Budget approved today. In other words, 99 percent of our budget woes lay on the spending side.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, we have a spending problem, not a taxing problem in this town. And I, for one, say it is time to take the trash out of Washington. It is time to go after the costly waste, fraud, and abuse that permeate every nook and cranny in our Federal Government.

Albert Einstein once said that the definition of insanity was doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. Well, Mr. Speaker, each and every year, we pour more money into the Federal Government with scant accountability; and we continue to throw billions of dollars of American taxpayers' money away in waste, fraud, and abuse.

Let me discuss just a few examples. The Office of National Drug Control Policy awarded one advertising agency a \$150 million grant to craft ads keeping American youth away from drugs, even though this company had a history of overbilling the Federal Government. In 2002 the firm had to repay the government \$1.8 million for overstating its labor costs, and some representatives of the company are currently under indictment for filing false claims. Now, the ads are part of a 5-year, \$1 billion campaign whose effectiveness has been greatly scrutinized. A private research firm concluded that teenagers viewing the ads were no less likely to use drugs than if they had not viewed them and that some were even more likely to use drugs. False claims and ineffective ads, yet Democrats want to raise our taxes to pay for more of this.

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS, is currently undertaking a major crackdown on phoney claims for power wheelchairs and has recovered \$52.5 million thus

far. One 89-year-old from Florida said that she and her husband were approached by a salesperson who pressured them into an unnecessary order. Medicare was then billed \$15,500 for two scooters, a hospital bed, and a pressure mattress, none of which was needed. Another senior citizen testified in court that a claim had been submitted without her approval. She then demonstrated her lack of a need for a wheelchair by walking before the jurors. Mr. Speaker, \$52 million in fraud, yet Democrats want to raise our taxes to pay for even more of this.

The Drug Enforcement Agency contracts with the private sector to get translators and transcribers in many of its field divisions. However, the Inspector General's Office found such loose controls were in place that \$2.8 million of the \$9.4 million paid was going to unauthorized and unallowable expenses. Yet Democrats want to raise taxes to pay for more of this.

In the year 2000, an investigation discovered that the Department of Energy spent more than \$38 million developing information systems that it already had. They already had the systems in place. Yet Democrats want to raise taxes to pay for more of this.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a few examples of the rampant waste in our Federal Government. After we begin to look closely, we see that so many Federal programs routinely lose 10, 20, even 30 percent of their taxpayer-funded budgets to waste, fraud, and abuse and have for years.

There are so many different ways that we can save money in Washington without cutting any needed services or without raising taxes as our Democrat colleagues seek to do. Because when it comes to Federal programs, it is not how much money we spend that counts, it is how Washington spends the money that counts.

SUPPORTING BLUE DOG BUDGET PHILOSOPHY IS RIGHT FOR AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, it is amazing listening to my colleague from Texas. One would think that we Democrats are still in control and that his party has not been in control of this House for the last 8 years. It is amazing listening to these speeches. It is amazing to see the budget that came out of the committee which he serves on, that next will propose to borrow \$377.6 billion, including all of the Social Security trust funds, all of the Civil Service trust funds, all of the Federal military retiree trust funds. In this same budget he supported today, the debt limit will be increased to \$8.88 trillion, and yet the finger-pointing stills goes on.

He had a chance today to vote for a budget enforcement bill that the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON)